BLUE GRASS BLADE

VOLUMNE XVIII. ON, KENTUCKY, SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 6TH, 1910. NUMBER 11.

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High and Ashland East Side

HISTORY OF RELIGION

SEVERAL PASSAGES IN NEW TESTAMENT EXPLAINED

Errors in Author's Former Series Pointed Out

(By Susan J. Peck.)

In reading some of the old numbers of the Blue Grass Blade, I find that a few errors not made by the type-setter occurred in the series of articles from my pen, entitled, "The History of Religion."

The letters were selections made by students and co-laborers from a more elaborate work (under the above title), prepared by myself and several friends, and used as lessons for our scholars.

When I copied them for publication, I did not notice the mistakes, but will correct them. The one is the statement that the genealogy recorded in Matt. 1, is that of Jesus as well as of Joseph.

There is nothing in the list of names per se to indicate that it is not, which accounts for the error of the pupils.

The second is the assertion that Jesus, whose genealogy is to be found in Luke III, was a just man. But the statement that one Jesus was unjust and the other just, is correct when applied to those two men whose genealogies are not included in the New Testament, but whom the church has made most prominent of them all, by mentioning oftenest their respective titles, "Son of God" and "Son of Man."

The "Son of God," or more properly, "Son of the God," as there were "gods many and lords many," was the only begotten son of James, whom King Herod slew. (Acts XII: 1, 2.) "Now about this time Herod the king, killed James, the brother of John, with the sword," and after the birth of the son, which occurred after the marriage of the widowed Queen Mary to her second husband, Joseph, King Herod sought to slay him also. In Rev. I, 5, we read that the father was dead before the birth, but after the begetting of his son.

I have written of the crucifixion of the "Son of Man," (whose title was given him in derision by the lords, because his father, the carpenter, was a commoner), and whose condemnation was secured under the rule of the son of James who was then known as the Holy Ghost (and who could not have been a ghose except he first had lived and died) of his resuscitation from the sleep induced by the taking of opium, his escape in the disguise of a priest; and I will now give the meaning of several passages which have been so often used to delude the laity. I can give the correct meaning of the Bible passages, for I was educated for the ministry; in fact, I studied theology that I might learn the truth, and so, be able to impart it to others.

The origin of the eating and drinking of the sacrament was the threat made by the Jew, the "only begotten son", to prisoners of the Inquisition, that when the Gentile "Son of Man" should be dead, that they, his companions and disciples, must eat his flesh and drink his blood or die of hunger and thirst, (St. John, vi, 53), "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." The words (vi; 54), "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life?" should be read as a question, for the "Son of Man" asked it in a tone of astonishment when the threat was told to him.

The words, "Take, eat; this is my body;" and "Drink, this is my blood," in reference to the bread and contents of the cup, the "Son of Man" said to his once fellow-prisoners, when after his escape he had returned with an army ("the second coming"), and had brought relief to the starving victims of the Inquisition. The words were spoken in contempt of his enemy's threat, and also in jest, and were answered by laughter and applause.

Before the "Son of Man" left the scene of his persecutions to secure help in quelling the insurrection and Inquisition, he bade his disciples "Watch" for his return, telling them what signs to look for in the heavens, and that they would be given in the night and during the dark period of the moon.

The story was both poetized and dramatized, and we have in the Testament the words of the poet and dramatist, "Immediately after the tribulation, shall the sun be darkened", (as it always is after sunset), "and the moon shall not give her light" (as happens once during each lunar month), "and the stars shall fall from heaven" (Matt. xxiv, 29, 30.) The falling stars were only the falling rockets sent up from the mountain slopes, that the watchers might under the protection of darkness join him at different points along his line of march, and so increase the number of his army that it might exceed in size that of his enemy, the "Son of God", and that he might by that means compel peace without bloodshed.

The words (Matt. xxiv, 27): "For as the lightning cometh out of the East and shineth even unto the West, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be," were in reference to the flashing rockets on every side.

Other passages which the priests have mad to seem mysterious, I can explain as rationally and as correctly.

Matthew, otherwise the "Son of Man," wrote and practiced the Gospel of Peace, of Goodwill, of Conscience, of Honesty, of Truth, of Human Rights; and his enemy, the "Son of God," wrote and practiced the Gospel of War, of Oppression, of Knavery, of the Kingdom versus the Republic, and in his revelation to John he declared his character, in Chapter xvi, 15, in the words: "Behold, I come as a thief in the night. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth on his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame." He would through others steal our very garments.

By transposing many passages, the two Gospels have been so mingled that it has been easy for the priests to attribute them to one person.

The "Son of Man" had a wife and three little children at the time of his crucifixion; and his words addressed to "little children" were to his own.

My readers must by now understand with me that there were two kinds of Christs, two kinds of Christianity, and two kinds of Christians, as there are now. For the word, 'Christ" in a language now dead, was the origin of the word Conscience, and meant the same.

And the words of Heb. vii, 3, are in reference to Christ, the Conscience— "Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life." And Heb. xiii, 8, "Jesus Christ" (Justice the Conscience) "the same yesterday, and today, and forever," should follow it as it did in the original book.

The advice to worship God (not the gods) for "God is a spirit," "the Spirit of Truth," and must be worshipped through the action of the Conscience; and "Let your light (of Conscience, the divine spark) so shine that men may see your good works" (of honesty) was given by those who sought o save their fellows from sin. And this was the original and genuine religion, or Christianity, for the teaching of which the "Son of Man" (like many others) was condemned by the lords.

In St. John viii, we read of him as judge of the court, and there we see instead of sustaining the law of Moses, he applied the law of justice, or Conscience, and discharged the prisoner with the words: "Go thou and sin no more."

Minneapolis, Minn.

EASTER SUNDAY.

A Pagan Festival Introduced a Thousanr Years Before the Time of Christ.

(By Joel M. Berry.)

Few people we find who ever took the time or trouble to investigate the subject matter of an Easter Sunday. They know it is called Easter Sunday, and they celebrate it as a holiday by feasting on eggs, and that is about the extent of what a large majority know about it. But when we tell them that it is no other than an old pagan festival, instituted thousands of years before the Christian era, then they charge us with trying to injure the church and its sacred teachings. If exposing its sacred fallacies is injuring the church, then we admit the truth of the charge.

Every festival of the Christian Church, apart from All Saints' Day, was originally a pagan festival. Sunday, the first day of the week, was the festival of the Roman Sun-god, as the other days of the week were festivals of the moon and five planets.

In the fourth century, Constantine made an effort to enforce rest on the first day from all work; but this interfered with the people's holiday, and in the ninth century the edict was repealed. Again in the sixteenth century the Puritans tried to restrict the liberty of the people on that day, but made a failure of it.

Easter commemorates the vernal equinox, when the sun crosses the equator, and the days become longer than the nights. It is by arrangement the first Sunday after the full moon, which happens upon or next after March 21st; and if the moon is at full on a Sunday, Easter Sunday is the Sunday after. As the egg was the symbol of birth, it became the symbol of Easter and Spring in connection with Sun-worship, representing the triumphant Sun. Eggs were sacred Easter offerings among the ancient Egyptians, Babylonians and Persians, who presented each other with colored eggs; and also among the Jews, who used eggs at the Passover, and the Chinese.

A form for blessing Easter eggs is found in the ritual of Pope Paul V. Great controversies have existed in the earlier churches over the celebration of Easter. In the latter part of the second century, a dispute existed concerning the day on which to celebrate. The Latin churches claimed it should be on Sunday, while the Eastern churches had been celebrating it on the 14th day of the month, Nisan. The controversy lasted nearly half a century.

About A. D. 150, Polycarp, the Bishop of Smyrna, visited Rome and explained the views of the Eastern churches. He was treated by Anicetus, who was then Bishop, as an equal. No attempt was then made to impose a different day upon the Asiatic churches. On the contrary, Polycarp and others celebrated Easter according to their own views in the city of Rome. But in the time of Victor, the controversy becoming more heated, an attempt was made to settle it. A council was called by Victor of all the churches of Italy. At this council it was decided that Easter should be celebrated on Sunday.

The celebration of the Easter festival in the light in which it was originally designed, is grandly beautiful. It contains both good sense and reason, but when the church comes to take it up and daub it over with a sanctimonious brush of sacredness, and institute it as one of their sacred festivals, then we begin to kick.

Now the whole sum and substance of the Easter festival, in a few words, is this: We find it to be of ancient origin. It denotes the change in the Spring from Winter to Summer. The egg is used as a symbol of life. Some are colored to represent the dignity of the receiver or high esteem in which they are held by the giver. So you see, the church has simply taken up one of the old ancient Pagan legends and dedicated it as one of their own inventions. Thus you see how easy it is for poor church worshippers to be worked up by a sanctimonious set of priests and preachers.

ISRAELITE'S PILLAR OF FIRE

An Explanation That Reduces the Divine Character of This and Other Phenomena.

The sacred fire of Israel, according to F. H. Balkwill, in the Nineteenth Century, was a composition of naphtha or liquid bitumen known to the Persians and Greeks, the method of preparation of which Moses learned from the Egyptian priests.

Thus Dr. Balkwill explains the pillar of cloud which checked the Egyptians pursuit of the Israelites, and the "fire from before the Lord" at the first sacrifice by Moses and Aaron after the Exodus, which "consumed upon the altar the burnt offering.

Of the angel or pillar of cloud going before Israel, he says: "The description would be realized if we suppose a large petroleum lamp to have been used, the flame being surrounded by a circular brass plate shield for safety, which would prevent the flame being seen. In still weather the dense smoke would ascend as a pillar to some height, and then, spreading out, form that cloud described later on as resting over the tent of the tabernacle, while the reflection on the smoke from the flame below would make it appear at night a pillar of light.

"As we might expect with such a dangerous combustible," adds Mr. Balkwill, "some terrible events happened, two of which we should call accidents. Soon after the imitation of the burnt offering by Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, the oldest sons of Aaron 'took each of them his censer and put fire therein, and laid incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which he had not commanded them. And there came forth a fire from the Lord and devoured them and they died before the Lord.' (Lev. x., 1.)

"Probably they had taken some of the sacred naphtha and put it in their censers, and anointed themselves with it as well, in order to give themselves as they thought greater sanctity. They had done wrong, no doubt, but it was the sort of wrong of a foolhardy workman in a powder factory.

"The next outbreak is attributed to the people's murmuring, but it reads as if some receptacle containing the sacred naphtha had been accidentally upset, and the fluid, running along the ground, had caught fire in some of the nearest outlying tents of the camp. 'And the fire of the Lord burnt among them, and devoured in the uttermost part of the camp.' (Num. xi., 1.)

Mr. Balkwill gives similar explanations of the triumph of Elijah over the priests of Baal (when naphtha was burned floating on the top of the water) and of narratives in the Maccabees, and concludes, "The evidence is circumstantial, cumulative, positive, and one would think sufficient to prove that the prophets and priests of Israel used a highly inflammable fluid, probably a preparation of refined petroleum, to bring down fire from the heavens."

FINDS A MISSING LINK.

Indiana Scientist Discovers Fish with Dorsal Cord.

Bloomington, Ind., January 28.—Dr. John Hazman, on an exploring trip in South America for the Carnegie Institute of Pittsburg, has discovered the missing link in animal life between the salamander and the fish, according to a dispatch received by Dr. Karl Eigemann, head of the Indiana University Zeological Department.

VOX POPULI

IS IT THE VOICE OF GOD?

A Brilliant Talk of Five Minutes Before the Liberal Club

(By Channing Severance).

The subject this evening is presented in the form of a conundrum: Is the Voice of the People the Voice of God? No; the voice of the people is not the voice of God. The voice of God is that of the priest, for only priests know what God thinks and what he wishes to say, and only priests do his talking?

But what is God anyway? God is nothing but a word of three letters, but to these letters the priests connects an idea, and that idea is this: that outside and apart from this material universe, there exists a personal power and intelligence which controls all things, and without which the universe would never have been and could not continue to be. Who discovered this important fact? The aforesaid priest, or one of his predecessors in the dim and distant past. How did he discover it? By exercising his imagination and drawing on his credulity.

Is such knowledge very valuable and trustworthy? No, but it passes for the truth when given to dull and stupid specimens of humanity, who lack the ability or the courage to think for themselves. Are such people very numerous? They are, for they comprise the great majority of human beings that walk this earth.

The God believers are noted for numbers but not for general intelligence as a rule, or the ability to think clearly and rationally.

Belief in God is mostly due to education, and the priest is the educator. He plants the idea of one in their minds when impressions sink deep and stick hard, and that period is early childhood, a time in life that is noted for credulity because the reasoning faculties are dormant and undeveloped. The God idea is sown on fertile soil, so to speak for anything a child is taught it can be made to believe, and that is why the world is full of idiotic nonsense, stale superstitions, and so many fancies that pass for facts. Once taught they are never entirely forgotton, aud the more the child is fed on such trash, the harder it is to develop clea· and rational thinking afterwards.

God, or what the priest has declared God to be, has done more to dwarf the human mind and keep it in a low state of unfoldment than any other thing or cause that has wielded an influence.

To believe in his God is to anchor the mind to a phantom, and to prevent it from natural tendencies which it would follow if left free to act, for this belief keeps it occupied with frivolous and fanciful things, as no conception of God has any connection with known and demonstrated facts.

The God of priestcraft is as separate and distinct from Nature and natural phenomena as theology is from real science, for matter is not good enough for the priest to make his God out of, so he uses a substance termed "immaterial," which, when analyzed by reason, is found to be only another name for nothing.

Pantheism is condemned and denounced by every priest that speaks for God, for he won't have it that God is part and parcel of the material universe, for such a one would be so ordinary and common place the mysteries of theology by which they bamboozle their mental slaves could not be worked. Natural laws are not complicated enough for priestcraft to do business with, so the deeper these foes of reason and common sense can plunge into fanciful theories and mental claptrap, the more certain their power minds and subject to their influence through fear and ignorance.

It is their self-assumed mission in life to speak for God, and they neglect no opportunity to do so; and when they refer to what God has done in human affairs through the power of the Bible and the church, we know they are calling attention to their own work. With craft and cunning the catch phrase was long ago put forth, "the voice of the people is the voice of God," to flatter the common herd of humanity with the idea they really control society and are something besides mere numerals. But facts show otherwise, for the few lead while the many follow in every department of life, and the people as a whole are blind followers of priests and politicians, who work together in harmony for a common purpose—power and plunder.

To say the voice of the people is the voice of God in public affairs, is to talk twaddle and jolly the stupid, to divert their attention from the forces that really rule and enslave them mentally and physically.

The only time the people ever really do things is when priestcraft and kincraft have forced them into an uprising like the French Revolution or one of the various kinds that have occured periodically in history. But at such times very little is heard or said about the old gag, "the voice of the people is the voice of God," but we do hear his real voice through the priest protesting against their disturbing law and order; so I repeat, the voice of the people is not the voice of God, for his voice is never heard only through the priest himself, who uses it to make the people comply with his wishes and be obedient to him.

THE DELUGE.

All is miracle in the history of the deluge—a miracle that days of rain should have inundated the four quarters of the globe, and have raised the waterfall to the heights of fifteen cubits above the top of the loftiest mountains; a miracle that there should have been cataracts, flood gates, and openings in heaven, a miracle, that all sorts of animals should have been collected in the ark from all parts of the world; a miracle that Noah found the means of feeding them for a period of ten months; a miracle that all the animals with all their provisions could have been included and retained in the ark; a miracle that the greater part of them did not die; a miracle that after quitting the ark, they found food enough to maintain them; and a further miracle, but a different kind, that a person thought himself capable of explaining how all the animals could be contained and fed in Noah's ark naturally that is, without a miracle.

But the history of the deluge being that of the most miraculous event of which the world ever heard, it must be the height of folly and madness to attempt an explanation of it; it is one of the mysteries which are believed by faith; and faith consists in believing that which reason does not believe—which is only another miracle.—Voltaire.

A little girl was trying to count the trees from the window of a train. She exclaimed in wonder, "How fast they run; and they've only one leg!"
—Woman's Journal.

BLUE GRASS BLADE

FOUNDED 1884.

By

CHARLES CHILTON MOORE.

And edited by him until his death, February 7, 1906.

JAMES E. HUGHES - - - Proprietor
126-128 Uorth Limestone Street,
Lexington, Kentucky.
P. O. Box 393.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

By mail, postpaid $1.00 pr. yr. in advance.

Five new yearly subscribers at one remittance 50 cents each.

Foreign subscriptions, postpaid $1.50 per year.

ADVERTISING RATES.

One inch, single column, 1 insertion 50 cents; one month, or four insertions, $1.00; six months $5.00; one year, $8.00.

Quarter column, 1 insertion, $2.00; one month, $4.00; six months, $20.00; one year, $30.00.

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ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS to the Blade will be discontinued at the expiration of the term for which the subscription has been paid up in advance. The address slip on the paper will show subscribers the date of expiration of subscription. Back numbers or numbers omitted will be sent, if asked for upon renewal in case of discontinuance.

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THE OFFICE of publication of the Blade is at 126-128 North Limestone Street, Lexington, Kentucky, to which all Freethinkers will be given a hearty welcome.

THE BLADE is entered at the Postoffice at Lexington, Kentucky, as secondclas mailing matter.

ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO JAMES E. HUGHES, Box 393, Lexington, Kentucky.

EDITORIALS.

Strange, is it not, that God should put a mark on Cain lest any might kill him, when. after killing his brother, he was the only born man in the world?

Four persons are referred to in the Gospels under the name of Zacharias. One of them was the father of John the Baptist. Three of them were slain in or near the temple, and one has no account of his death.

Why does not Matthew say, 'I was chosen?'' Instead thereof, he says, "And as Jesus passed forth from thence he saw a man named Matthew." We wonder if he meant himself, or some other person?

"And the Lord said: 'I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is, come unto me, and if not I will know.'' (See Genesis, 18:20. We ask how could an omnipotent being be absent in one locality and present in another at the same time? How could an All-wise being find out something that he did not already know Then, in case the Lord did come down, as he says, who did he leave to count the sparrows as they fell, and to answer the prayers as they come up in his absence. Answer quick!

There is too much truth waiting to be told,—too many interesting topics to talk about and investigate, and too much good that might be done, for any live, wide-awake and interested, well-meaning person to either sit or stand still and say or do nothing. Too much help wanted and too much room unoccupied that might be used to better advantage, for any thoughtful, liberal-minded person to waste his or her time to no purpose. The world with the people in it are advancing rapidly. Old things are passing away. New ones are in view. The time has come for all liberal-minded persons to be on the alert.

THE PRESENT LIFE.

The present life is the only one we are interested in. Make a heaven of this life. Then in case we find a life in the future, we will be prepared for that also.

Mr. Percy Ward in Truth about God and Life for January, says, that he has made the discovery that there is no future life; in other words, that death ends all. In this case Mr. Ward simply makes a statement that he nor any other living person can prove. He knows no more about a future life than I do, and I know so much less than nothing that it is a waste of time to talk about it. All that any honest living person can truthfully say on that subject is that they "don't know.''

People are just beginning to learn how to enjoy this life; they begin to think and reason for themselves, and the moment they do that they begin to realize what slaves they have been to a superstitious priesthood and commence a reformation at once. Liberty is what the people need in order to enjoy this life. Thomas Paine told them that over a hundred years ago, but they were so firmly fixed on a Jesus at that time that they could see nothing but him. But notice today how swiftly the tide is turning: people are just beginning to realize who their friend is, and who has been telling them the truth. They find that Jesus, with his believe or be damned, is vanishing out of sight, and the world is my country and to do good is my religion, is fast taking its place.

We have prophecied for a long time that a new savior would soon be needed in this country and sure enough he comes up in the person of Thomas Paine. From this on he will be at the head of all religious affairs, in the estimate of all liberal honest thinking people, and will grow in favor with the masses every day. The new savior lays no claim to divinity or miraculous birth, don't claim to have rose from the dead, no raised any other dead person to life. He writes out his own geneology and don't leave it for other writers to quarrel over.

Here is just where Jesus makes the great mistake of his life, claiming to be the all in all, yet altogether amounting to nothing

We are both pleased and proud of our new prince of peace. He needs no myth or miracle to introduce himself to the people. He has already done that in his own hand writing, and the people are just beginning to read them, and the more they read the better they like them. So in view of the present state of affairs we ask, Is it not high time for the people of this country to waken up, and either say or do something that will give satisfaction. Two thousand years is a long time to wait and then be disappointed. The truth is this, the people are just beginning to find out that they have been fooled. And thousands, though as well convinced as I am of the fraudulent teachings, they have not the courage or grit to come to the front and say so. Some are afraid of losing their good standing in church society, while others are afraid of the nice little Christian epithets that would be forthcoming. The minister, he would fear the loss of his salary, so he thinks that a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, therefore he sticks to the boat that has the more bread and butter in it.

The new Era just coming in is what claims our attention. We are glad we have lived to see it. A new savior and a new set of creeds without any promise of future punishment is what suits us. We have often heard the remark that Thomas Paine had lived a hundred years in advance of his time. We cannot admit it for a moment. That he lived a hundred years in advance of the people of his time we will readily admit. But he lived at the right time exactly to prove to the world his great worth and wisdom. He was the first man who ever wrote the words "United States of America,'' and it is generally conceded by all honest truth telling people that if it had not been for his untiring efforts and council during the great struggle for liberty, ten to one there would have been no United States of America today. He lived at the right time exactly to save this republic from ruin and he lives today in the estimate of all honest liberal minded people as the benefactor of mankind. He did more real service for the good of humanity in one day than Jesus did in a lifetime. And we find today that while Jesus is fast passing into a state of oblivion, Paine is just emerging into a state of magnificence. Monuments are being erected in honor of his memory, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific his name is being sounded as the Author-Hero of the American Revolution. See the splendid address at Los Angeles by Mr. Channing Severance, in the Blue Grass Blade of January 23rd.

Says the London Freethinker: "The Blue Grass Blade, of Lexington, Kentucky, resumes the old shape it had under the editorship of its founder, the late C. C. Moore, whom we met at Chicago in 1896. For nearly a year the Blade has been edited by Mr. Charlesworth, and smaller in shape, but with more pages; but that Freethought advocate is going to set up a paper of his own as the organ of a new Rationalist Society he has started. Mr. James E. Hughes, the proprietor of the Blade, published it in C. C. Moore's time, and is undoubtedly devoted to the paper. He says he will keep it going as long as he can, and we believe him; but the statement that "our very existence now depends upon the enthusiasm of our contributors." "We would be glad to pay for articles if we could," he says, "but remember how much greater is our work, and we do not get anything out of it either." Mr. Hughes states, nevertheless, that he paid Mr. Charlesworth twenty-four dollars per week as editor, but he could do so no longer, and Mr. Charlesworth went out. How he is going to make another paper succeeed better we fail to understand, but we wish him success. Our readers will see the bearing of this paragraph on Mr. Foote's recent "Words to Freethinkers."

PAPER SACRED

Judge Rules—Old Woman Jailed for Wrapping Wares in Religious Publication.

Vienna, January 29.—A singular case of judicial zeal in defending the sanctity of religious publications is attracting considerable attention. Last April a woman who owns a small grocery shop at Cracow bought a number of old newspapers to wrap her wares in. Among the papers were some outer sheets of the Jesuit organ "The Messenger of the Heart of Jesus," on which various religious illustrations were printed. A municipal authority who is a member of an ecclesiastical committee presently visited the shop and warned the woman no longer to pack her goods in such paper. She accepted the warning and gave him all the sheets of "The Messenger" that she could find. A few days later the municipal authority returned with a policeman, rummaged in the shop, and found some sugar packed in the outer sheet of "The Messenger." The woman was thereupon prosecuted for "ridiculing an institution of the Catholic church," an despite her defense that the incriminating package had been made before she had received the warning, she was condemned to seven days' imprisonment and one day's fasting.

An appeal was made against this sentence to the Polish section of the Vienna Supreme Court of Cassation on the ground that the aleged offense had not been committed either objectively or subjectively, in as much as the religious figures printed on the outer sheet of the Jesuit organ are not consecrated, and that the woman herself had not used the paper with sacrilegious intent. The Supreme Court has, nevertheless, confirmed the Cracow sentence in all particulars.

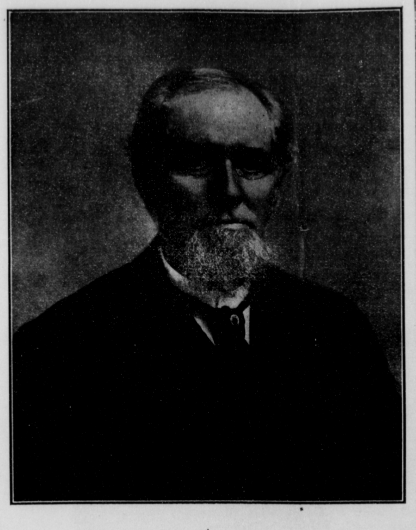
THE IRREPARABLE EVILS OF CHRISTIAN PREJUDICE.

(By Henry P. Floyd.)

It would take a large volume to exhaust the list of evils for which Prejudice is directly or indirectly responsible. Prejudice perverts the intellect, blinds the judgment and renders social justice impossible. The prejudiced man is of necessity a conscious or unconscious liar. The truth is not in him, nor is he in a position ever to find it. The fact is there, right under his nose, staring him in the face, but he cannot or will not see it. The poor fellow is totally blind in relation to all that lies outside the small circle of his own beliefs and opinions, or his own outlook upn life and character. He belongs to a party, and to all not included in his set, he is atrociously unjust. He persistently tells lies about them, and never has a single qualm of conscience. His party is absolutely right and all others must be absolutely wrong.

And yet, mischievous as all this lying undoubtedly is, perhaps it is not utterly destitute of good results. Sooner or later every lie weakens the cause of the liars. Many of the lies told all through the ages about the Bible stand now fully exposed by criticism, and the consequence is, that the blind worship of the Bible is rapidly dying out even in the churches. Not a few Christians have already learned that the delineation of Atheists by Christian ministers is almost wholly false, with the result that ministers are no longer held in reverence as they once were. When people began to realize that the exaltation and glorification of Jesus in the pulpit was largely a rhetorical performance, it became a notable fact that their interest in the ministrations of the church was decidedly on the wane. At last the masses of the people are getting into the habit of doing their own thinking instead of letting priests and ministers do it for them. Natural knowledge is slowly gaining ground, and there is a corresponding slump in supernatural belief. The facts of history, the grim realities of life, are being laid bare in the face of the world, and the dreams, so long treated as realities, are passing away. We are now in the transition process. Some ministers, aware of this, are doing their utmost to make the transition as smooth and imperceptible as possible. They are dismissing the dreams as gently as they can. They are telling its real emphasis is on the non-theological, on morality as a social relation. It still speaks of God, but by God it means love, and by love, care of the public welfare. It talks glibly about the life divine, of the life of the deity, but what it has in its mind is the ideal life of humanity. Yes, we are in the transition process from dreams to realities, from fancies to facts, from lies to truths. Secularists are interested spectators of this subtle and salutary change, and they ought to do all they can to hasten its consummation.

Passing of an Octogenarian



It is with deep regret that we announce the death at Canal Dover, Ohio, on the 30th of January, of Samuel Toomey, one of the leading Freethinkers of the Middle West. Mr. Toomey had lived eighty years, and they were years full of the ups and downs of life. His early life was spent with relatives and neighbors, and it is said of him he never spent more than thirty days in the school-room. At the age of sixteen he began an apprenticeship as a Blacksmith at Gettysburg, Pa., where he worked for one year, when he borrowed fourteen dollars, shoulders his effects and started out on the battle of life alone. Walking for three weeks, often footsore, tired and hungry, he reached Sugar Creek Falls, O., where he secured work in a blacksmith shop, and in a single year became owner of the business. He soon achieved the reputation of being not only the best blacksmith but the best mechanic for miles around, and enjoyed the respect and confidence of everyone in his vicinity. In 1850, at the age of twenty years his shop, stock of tools and the first buggy he ever made were destroyed by fire. He then removed to Wilmot, Ohio, and engaged in carriage building. In 1860 he removed to Canal Dover, where he has done an immense carriage building since, constantly improving the style and quality of his work.

He was the inventor of many improvements on carriages, sulkies, rims, etc., and was well known in Lexington, the Blue Grass region, and other centers of the horse breeding interests as the inventor and owner of the famous Toomey Sulky. He was a great friend of the Blade; in fact one of the best friends it ever had, and his demise is deeply felt in the office. He was a successful business man, one whose opinions are worthy the respect of any man, and recently writing on the subject of religion, he said:

"My father and mother belonged to the old German Lutheran church, but I was taken away from home so very young that I got little religious instruction from them, but I mainly fell into the hands of the same class of people, so I had to go to church. In this way I grew up, I joined the United Brethren church when eighteen years of age, but never could fully believe the Bible stories. At the same time I became a reader of the 'Antislavery Bugle,' published in Salem, Ohio. Salem was at that time the headquarters of those then known as Broadguagers, or Infidels. Such reading brought about thinking and investigation, and, as you know, investigation brings Infidelity. So for the last fifty years I did my own thinking, reading such books as any unbiased man should read; and, of course, as with the great Darwin, it ended in Agnosticism, and very strongly in Atheism."

TO MR. J. K. ENGLE, ALIAS "UTAH."

Mr. Engle found some amusement in reading my article on "The Soul" in the Blue Grass Blade. He makes some dogmatic answers to my questions, which cause me to be amused. He is cock-sure that I have a soul, but only on account of something I saw in Genesis. He admits that part of the Bible is "rot," but calls me down because I think it all "rot." Mr. Engle jumps to the sweeping conclusion that I am in search of God. Satan forbid! God is the last thing that I would search for. I do not want anything to do with any Gods or fairies. No genii in mine I do not look beyond man for my loftiest ideal. The man who does is deficient in class respect. The reaching out for divinity is puerile, and shows up a mis-placed human.

If God looked after folks, Teddy Roosevelt would not need to carry a rifle in Africa. He could walk right up to a lion and God would not let him be injured in the least. This idea of God is taught in Daniel, where God prevented the lion from biting Daniel. Now, Roosevelt is a God-fearing man, but depends upon a modern rifle.

Three Jewish "kids" were put into a fiery furnace, but the heat never touched them. You see, Mr. Engle, the scriptural idea of God is that he takes care of humanity, but when we know that God is invincible in faith, but invisible in fact, we do not take much stock in God.

I am glad that there is no God. I do not want any. I renounce any part that may accrue to me in God, and, if Mr. Engle desires a double portion of God's love, he may have mine.

Mr. Engle has utterly failed, altho' backed with a firm belief in God, to convince me that I have a soul. If he and God cannot make that matter plain to me, of what use are either or both of them in argument? Has Mr. Engle seen a soul apart from a body? Has he conversed with a disembodied spirit?

If there were a universal longing and reaching out for God, would not I have that desire the same as Mr. Engle has? If Mr. Engle is one of the elect and I one of the damned, by fore-ordination, then are we but pawns upon the checker-board of life? If, on the other hand, if we are left to reason out our situations, is not the one who reaches one conclusion as likely to be right as the other?

If a fellow substitutes faith for faculty, and commits mental suicide, I, for one, am not going to praise him for it. He may have faith and believe that sour is sweet, but my palate is a common-sense one and takes things as they appeal to it. No amount of faith can change a single fact. Faith is prima facie evidence of unbalanced wheels in head-gearing. Get your head-works in alignment with sense, Mr. Engle.

JNO. F. CLARKE.

Arlington, Md.

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Don't Drop Me From Your List.

Mosier, Oro.—Dear Bro. Jimmie—I am still getting the Blade. Am glad it is a live corpse. I think it looks good to see that distinguished picture in the nothwest corner. Was sorry of the unpleasant episode with you and your former editor; so let us bury the past and avoid dissention. Don't drop me from your mailing list. I'll remit soon as I can. Let us all pull together and help humanity above dogmas. creeds and supstition. Yours for truth.—R. W. SIMPSON.

You Are Publishing a Fine Paper.

Paris, Texas.—Friend Hughes.—Please find here exchange for $1 subscription to the Blue Grass Blade for one year. I have recently received three numbers, you might begin with the first one. You are publishing a fine paper, the three copies I read had some splendid articles.

May you live long and the Blade live long also. It ought to be endowed for eternal life here. No heaven for me. Fraternally.—R. PETERSON.

Good Wishes for the Blade.

National Military Home, O.—Editor Hughes.—I am more than pleased to see you in such good spirits over the turn things have taken. I hope the change may prove a blessing to all. I am a friend of the Blade, always have been, and like friend James E. Mills of Iowa, like it better than ever. I was discouraged over the prospects for a while, but things begin to liven up and look like business, so we will stick to the old ship as long as the flag is in sight. We even respect the name, Blue Grass Blade, in honor of its noble founder, Charles C. Moore. Few men in the Liberal ranks were prompted by purer motives for the benefit of mankind than he. He, of course, had his peculiarities, but who is it that don't have them. We admit that we have ours. If we did not have them we would not be setting here writing an article for the Blade. Stick to the Blade, let them say what they may, they are doing themselves more injury than you.—JOEL M. BERRY.

Bro. Berry Raises a New Lead.

eVra, S. D.—Editor James E. Hughes:—I see Bro. J. M. Berry raises a new lead, in the fact that neither the age, death or burial of any female is spoken of in the Bible. It is passing strange, however, as imagination is the first women mentioned and whose office is to bring sin into the world, as well as to be the mother of saviors, she is not dead yet.

Near the end of the Bible, Rev. 17th chapter, we have ignorance as another woman, and while church and state supported by the people, as a wonderful beast, constantly making war on her, captains of industry also exploit this woman.

Femininity indicates that the thing represented relates to a mental state, while physical conditions are denoted in the Bible as cities; so ignorance continues to abide in Babylon where captains of industry and grafters ply their avocation with her, she cannot assuredly be dead.

Along somewhere in the Bible we may find two women, one a virtuous wife, the other a concubine, and as we are told these are an allegory, we should not expect either one to have grown old or to have died.

The last woman we will stir up will be a great wonder; a woman in heaven clothed with the sun. As there is to be no need for a sun in heaven, the great wonder is why she took it there, and how she got it into heaven.—F. S. WEAVER.

The Blade Not Dead Yet.

Chaffee, Mo.—Mr. Hughes.—I am glad the Blue Grass Blade is not dead yet, but still alive and active for the exposition of error and promulgation of freedom of thought as ever. One of the best literary productions I have seen of late is Bro. Severance's lecture on Thomas Paine. I have written some comments and criticisms on this paper I want you to publish in whole, if not too long, or in part, and I want a dozen or two papers containing the Thomas Paine eulogy and the same number of papers containing my comments on the same. I send 75 cents for a renewal of my subscription for the next six months, and hope to renew again when that time expires. I will send more money to pay for the extra papers when my article appears. I look to the Blade as a Freethought and unmuzzled medium for the honest expression of my convictions, and that is more than I can expect of some professed Freethought papers. Yours in truth.—A. E. WADE.

Death of a Good Freethinker.

Elyria, O.—Editor of the Blue Grass Blade:—One week ago, January 22, we lost, in Elyria, our most ardent champion of Freethought and Rationalism as expounded by your publication.

Mr. M. B. Sonnels died peacefully, painlessly and without struggle, owing to a sudden weakening of the heart. He had just returned from a lengthy walk and hardly twenty minutes after dropping into his chair, he lapsed into unconsciousness from which he could not be roused before his death. two hours subsequently.

Scarcely ten minutes prior to loss of consciousness he reiterated his frequently expressed wish that no "howling preacher" be tolerated with his hysterical rant at his (our friend's) funeral. This request was heeded. The enclosed remarks by his two close friends, T. C. Jefferies of Cleveland and E. E. Rimbach of Elyria, constituted the services, which were opened and closed with vocal selections from two fellow musicians of the deceased. The reading of Robert G. Ingersoll's words at the grave of his brother concluded the remarks of the last speaker. At conclusion of the last rites for our dead, the body was tenderly carried to Murray Ridge Cemetery for interment.

Trusting that you will make known through your columns the loss to the grand cause of Freethought, I beg to remain. Respectfully.—ROSE MORIARTY.

The Union of Church and State.

Editor Ottumwa Courier:—We think we have fairly presented our case before your readers, to the effect that Sunday laws are contrary to the principles of liberty, and to the principles on which our government is founded: that is contrary to the eternal separation of church and state. As touching religion each should be free. When government goes beyond this anarchy is preferable. However before taking a final leave of the Sunday question I would take a passing note of Bro. Graham's article. He states that I give no ground for argument—only my declaration—that we are now under no divine obligation to observe a Sabbath. And he says I come to this conclusion from Higher Critics: on the ground that the original Sabbath was based on error. But, mind you, he, himself says it was a part of the old covenant, and that that covenant is dead. Now that which is dead is void. Whether born of error or truth it lays in the same coffin. And so until he shows a resurrection, which he failed to do, he leaves the verdict for us. Had he read all the articles, which he says he did not, he would have seen an offer of $100 for a passage of scripture threatening any one for working on Sunday. Jesus' Sabbath was the one of the old covenant, now dead, as has been shown.

The founders of our government and our greatest statesmen, being versed in history, have seen the great evils growing out of the union of church and state. They have used precaution in the constitution and otherwise, to prevent the commingling of religion and government. Notwithstanding all of this there has been all along a large number of people, well meaning people too, people who generally want to do the right thing when they know it, who have demanded a little here and a little there of religion mixed with government. It is not a hard matter for us to see the injustice of this when the religion placed upon the throne of government is the other fellow's religion. When we are forced to pay homage to a religion that we count as superstition it is not hard for us to see how rapidly we are lapsing back to the dark ages. But when it is our religion that is thus favored and when the votaries of religions contrary to ours are forced to submit, or be taxed to support such religion we are so sure that our religion is the true one, the only one that is good for us and all mankind, that we cannot see how it can be wrong to give it an exalted place upon the throne and force all to bend the knee to it. There is nothing that many are more certain of than of the truth of their particular religion while in reality there is nothing that people may be more mistaken in. It is supposed that where good people are at the helm that government blended with religion could never lead us back to the dark ages, nor even a step in that direction, provided, of course, those good people are ourselves. But I wish to give an example of good people uniting religion and government and that in the case of England; and the reason I go across the ocean for the example is because it is easier for us to see the faults of others than those of our own. The Church of England has for ages taxed the people under the authority of the government, and used that money to build churches and hire preachers, etc. Taxed the people to support a religion that many do not believe in. This is nothing more nor less than wholesale robbery. Yet the mass of the ones that reach in their neighbors' pockets and take from them their earnings are honest people, they would not knowingly wrong their neighbors of a single cent. But why, Oh why when religion is connected with government are they so eternally slow, hopelessly slow in learning what is right and what is wrong? Why for ages has the church along with government, its authority, put hundreds of thousands of innocent people to death for their opinions, while any one with the smallest amount of reason ought to know that every person has as much right to his opinion as he has to life, liberty or the pursuit of happiness? Why is it that religion, the supposed eternal champion of the right, so persistantly for ages practices the wrong? I think I can give the correct answer to the above. Religion takes its authority not from this world but from one unknown. Not from reason or experience but from that supposed to be both. It tends to be faithful to duty but slow to advance, for how sive. It cannot bank on the supposed to be perfect? Now government to be just must be progressive. tI cannot bank on the supposition that it is perfect and cannot be improved upon. It must be a servant of reason and not a sovereign over it, it must vary with experience. It must have its source from the people and not beyond the skies. Governments are for people of this world and there their authority should end. Another reason why so many religious people are so slow to use reason where it might conflict with their faith is that man is threatened with the most awful punishment for non-belief, and it is known that reason is quite often a disturber of faith.

In vindication of Jesus against the charge of being the author of these words: "He that believeth not shall be damned." The Higher Critics contend they are an interpolation, that they are not found in some early manuscripts, and that several years after the whole Christian world was astonished at the idea just then for the first time revealed to Peter (See Acts 11th chapter) to the effect that the gospel was to be preached to the Gentiles, and since the above text was a command to preach to all nations they could not be the words of Jesus, for in that event Peter's vision would be out of place, would be no revelation at all.

For centuries religion has been taught in public schools at public expense. Nearly all of Spain's schools are religious schools.

Francisco Ferrer who gave his life a few months ago as a martyr to free his country's schools saw that his nation was teaching the children too much concerning a world that no body knows anything about and too little concerning the world they live in. He saw his country sinking lower and lower for the want of proper education and he conceived the idea of secularizing the schools, but for his philanthropic efforts he was court-martialed on a flimsy pretext by mock court and shot to death.

It seems that our own Iowa is determined to have religion taught in the public schools. The Bible, its statues say, shall not be excluded from the public schools and provision is made for the teacher and the children to recite the Lord's prayer. This prayer is utter idolotry in the eyes of the Jew, but he is taxed to support the schools and forced to send his children there. But there are some court decisions under this law given in view of relief, but the intended relief implies the disease, and in deed the relief is worse than the disease. For instance, the teacher must read the Bible without comment. Comment would be sure to give offense to some of the different sects. Now there are large portions of the Bible, if read to children without explanation, would give them wrong ideas of science which is another word for truth. To read the Bible without explanation to children is to teach them falsehood instead of truth. If we must have the Bible read to our children I want, for instance, that six-day creation explained to them. Either tell them, with the Higher Critics, that it is not true, or that the six days mean six great ages. This last position is that taken by all orthodox that are in any way versed in science. It would seem then that man should labor during six ages and observe the seventh age as a Sabbath.

But it is surely best to keep the Bible out of the schools and let the teacher teach only what he is competent to explain.

1909——1909

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Singing: Cosmian Hymn Book.

Lesson for Feb. 13, 1910.

The Birth of Christ Jesus; chapter XXXIV; page 363 to close of Chapter.

Q.—What did the ancients mean by the "Queen of Heaven" or the Celestial Virgin" of the sphere?

A.—The space occupied by our solar system.

Q.—Tell us how Christmas was celebrated in India.

A.—The people decorate their houses with garlands, and gave presents to friends and relatives.

Q.—How is the Christmas solstice celebrated in China?

A.—With religious solemnities, and all shops are shut up, and courts are closed.

Q.—Who was born on the 25th of December, according to the Chinese tradition?

A.—Buddha, the son of the Virgin Maya.

Q.—The Persians also had a splendid time the 25th of December in honor of their Lord and Savior, who was born on that day. Tell us his name.

A.—Mithras.

Q.—What was the name of the ancient Egyptians' "Queen of Heaven" and Virgin Mother of their Savior Horus?

A.—Isis.

Q.—What does Rigord tell us about the worship by the Egyptians of a Virgin Mother prior to the birth of Christ?

A.—That the Egyptians exhibited the effigy of her son lying in the manger, in the manner the infant Jesus was afterwards laid in the crib at Bethlehem.

Q.—When was "Osiris", son of the "Holy Virgin" born?

A.—December 25th.

Q.—What was the name of the Greeks' Savior, and when was he born?

A.—His name was Hercules, and he was born at early dawn on the 25th of December.

Q.—Tell us how Hercules was shown to the people at Christmas time.

A.—As an infant, as is done by Christians at this day on Christmas morning in Rome.

Q.—The birthday celebrations and ceremonies of Adonis took place in a cave, in Bethlehem, and who was later born in a cave?

A.—Christ Jesus.

Q.—What did the Romans call the 25th of December, and how did they celebrate the day?

A.—They called Christmas the "Birthday of Sol, the Invincible." It was a day of universal rejoicing, all public business being suspended.

Q—Tell us who came into Rome a few weeks before the winter solstice, to play on their pipes and beg for money.

A.—The Calabrian shepherdds.

Q.—How did the ancient Germans celebrate Christmas centuries before Christ?

A.—The Calabrian shepherds. and by sacrifices made to their gods, with jovial hospitality, the burning of the Yule-log on Christmas Eve, a custom surviving to this day.

Q.—How did the ancient Scandinavians celebrate the 25th of December, and what did they call Christmas night?

A.—They feasted in honor of Freyr (son of the Supreme God Odin) and the goddess Frigga; the night was called "Mother-night."

Q.—How did the Druids of Great Britain and Ireland celebrate the solstice?

A.—They made great fires, and lighted them on the tops of hills.

Q.—But how did the Mexicans celebrate the 25th of December?

A.—They feasted for many days, following.

Q.—Tertullian, a Father of the Church, who flourished about A. D. 200, affirms as rank idolatry what customs?

A.—Decking the doors with garlands or flowers on festival days, according to the custom of the heathens.

Q.—What have evergreens and garlands and Christmas trees to do with Christianity?

A.—Simply nothing.

Q.—What is the Christmas we observe now?

A.—The old Yule-feast which was held by all the Northern nations from time immemorial.

Q.—The greenery and Christmas-trees laden with gifts is unquestionably what?

A.—A relic of the symbols of which our heathen forefathers signified their faith in the powers of the returning sun to clothe earth again.

Q.—Mr. Gibbon, speaking of the Christians adopting the 25th of December as the birthday of their god, says what?

A.—The Roman Christians, ignorant of the real date of his (Christ's) birth, fixed the solemn festival of the 25th of December, the Brumalia, or Winter Solstice, when the pagans annually celebrated the birth of Sol.

MIRACLE WORKERS.

(By Joel M. Berry.)

We find no record of his miracles in the Bible, but history tells us that no one is accredited with grander results in that line than the Apostle Peter. Others, such as Simon Magnus and Appolonius, may be justly credited with performing a greater number, but none any more miraculous.

Peter puts the miracles of Jesus clear out of sight with one stroke. The late Judge Waite, in his comments on the miracles of Peter, says: "The received accounts of the miracles of Peter are sufficient to exist our astonishment."

But the most wonderful of all his miracles we find related in the "Acts of Peter and Andrew," where he is represented as making a camel go through the eye of a needle. The account says: "After the needle had been brought, and all the multitude of the city were standing by to see, Peter looked up and saw a camel coming. And he ordered her to be brought. Then he fixed the needle in the ground, and cried out with a loud voice saying: "In the name of Jesus Christ who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, I order thee, O camel, to go through the eye of the needle." Then the eye of the needle was opened like a gate, and the camel went through it, and all the multitude saw it. Then the miracle was repeated,—one person, Onisephorus, who would not believe, sent for another needle and another camel, with a woman sitting on the camel, and "they went through twice."

In the Synoptics, we find the miracle referred to three times in connection with the rich man getting to Heaven, all three of them different of course. Matthew says that it was "a rich young man who came to Jesus inquiring what he might do to inherit eternal life." Mark says that "one came running to Jesus and kneeling before him," etc. He doesn't distinguish the person. Luke says that it was " a certain ruler who came to Jesus inquiring," etc. But Jesus tells them all what they should do, and that "it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven." And his disciples were astonished out of measure, and asked "Who then can be saved?" Jesus replies, "With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible."

In another account of this matter, which we gather from the to them." And Jesus, turning about A. D. 230, says: "Another rich man said unto him, 'Master, what good thing shall I do that I may live?' He said unto him, 'O man, fulfill the law and the prophets.' And he answered Him, 'I have done so.' Then said he unto him, 'Go sell all thou hast and give to the poor, and come follow me.' Then the rich man begun to smite his head, and it pleased him not. And the Lord said unto him, 'How sayest thou, I have fulfilled the law and the prophets when it is written in the law, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself?' And lo! many of thy brethren, sons of Abraham, are covered with filth and dying of hunger, and thy house is full of many good things, and nothing therefrom goeth forth at any time to them."g And Jesus, turnin himself about, said unto Simon, his disciple sitting near him, "Simon, son of Jonas, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

We now propose, in a few words, to give our version of the whole affair,—miracle, rich man, and all.

First of all, we will say, nothing miraculous has ever happened in this world, never will, and in case there was any truth to be found in the Bible teaching, the rich will have a serious time getting into the Kingdom of Heaven. But in case Old Peter is entrusted with the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and in case he is able to open the eye of a needle so that a camel may go through it, with a woman on its back, we think he ought to be able to open the gates of Heaven wide enough to let in both rich and poor. Let us hope he may do it, at least.

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JAMES E. HUGHES, Lexington, Ky.

DEATH OF MERTON SONNELS

Words of E. E. Rimbach at the Funeral of This Noted Freethinker.

Friends:—

It is one of the saddest, the most solemn, but sacred duties which we are called upon to face, to discharge the last sorrowful rites for our departed dead. It is not what true men regard a repugnant, but a painful duty. We do not shirk what nature has made inevitable. We would not shun that demanded of our manhood, our brotherhood, and every fiber of true sentiment. But at times strength fails the strongest to meet unflinchingly the shock sustained in a loss which the mind cannot place within the bounds of reconciliation.

Such a loss, kind friends, do we mourn today; a loss to account for which beggars the mind's resources for adequate explanation. We can but bow in meek submission that our problem is one the mind cannot grapple. It realizes and senses its inability to place this loss within the harmony of nature, so at variance is it with nature's plan. It is in the economy of nature to remove early and at the outset, from the lower forms of life, those less fit to enter upon and pursue the struggle for existence. It selects the fittest to carry out life's purposes, through the period of first growth, development and maturity then to enter upon the golden harvest. 'Tis then, as with the shock of corn, that we feel that life's functions have been fulfilled, as do we the ship's safe return to the harbor from whence it came.

But how different, friends, here today! He whose loss we mourn, was at his prime, in full vigor of all his powers and faculties. He drank of life with keenest zest. The comradeship of his friends and fellows was something to be shared with supreme relish. When just as all went bright and well, the tender thread of life was snapped.

Could we but only answer,—"Wherefore"?

Merton B. Sonnels was born at Rochester, Ohio, (Lorain county) May 17th, 1867, where a rural atmosphere offered him full opportunity to investigate and commune with nature, so worshipped by him later as a mature man. His early life was spent at Amherst, O., near which he attended school at Kennedy Corners. His adventurous, boyish nature first drew him from his home as a sailor. For two years, after the life at home, he was on the Lakes, and there an alert and keen perception found ample material to feed a naturally hungry mind. At nineteen, he entered the employ of the L. S. & M. S. R. R., as locomotive fireman. His competency and natural aptitude early won him recognition, and at 23, hardly more than a youth, he was promoted to assume the responsibilities of an engineer, earning him the distinction of being the youngest engineer on this great railroad system. In the following year, on the 17th day of March, 1891, he was united in marriage to Elnora Powell,—and the sorrowing wife, a grieving mother to mourn this loss. The severity of the demands of railroad life, involving the unexpected calls for service, led him to seek duties less irregular, and in 1899 he resigned from the position to enter the employ of the National Tube Co., with which concern he has been associated for the past ten years.

Merton Sonnels was a man of rare natural endowments. He possessed that clear, keen perception which, instinctively and at once, separates fact from fiction. This and a gift of logical analysis served him ably in making his mind's own that which is worthy, helpful, essential and meritorious. A pleasing and winning personality, a pre-possessing manner, opened for him a wide circle of acquaintanceship, led him to those whose association was profitable, and brought him to those who felt the need of the fiery enthusiasm which was his.

He was an enthusiast! He was supremely and intensely enthusitstic for justice, for humanity, for brotherhood, for fellowship,—guided always by the light of reason and rational investigation.

He would make all men free, bodily, mentally, thoroughly. He would have them free from the tyrants of the earth, and the enslaving superstitions of the mind.

But as well did he champion, not only the general and popular acquisition of untrammeled freedom from physical and mental bondage,—but the fullest, widest opportunity for culture, leisure, the arts and the elevating forces.

His was a wide acquaintance with the field of worthy fiction, the drama, the grand symphonic master-pieces. Seldom when able, did he neglect the opportunity to hear the gifted interpreters, dramatic and operatic.

Often I have heard him, with glowing enthusiasm, recount some scene in which the great Mansfield or again the incomparable Bernhardt electrified and thrilled the audience to a man.

For days this man's soul seemed entranced after drinking the inspiration of a great symphony, presented so faultlessly as did the great Thomas and his superb band of artists. The ennobling, the inspiring, the heroic, each found instinctive response in our dear friend's soul.

His was a sensitive spirit. The harsh, the depressing, the stifling forces in a social texture pained him; and he cried out in protest with all the manhood and courage there was in him.

He faced fearlessly every problem with which he was confronted and gave to all about him the sincere expression of his honest investigation. If it were an old tradition, long cherished because the simple had pronounced it venerable, which unqualifiedly seemed to him subversive of human happiness, he did not hesitate to overturn it and brand it inhumane. As quickly, when he felt the elevating and ennobling influences of the aesthetic forces, did he seek to infect his fellows with the inspiration aroused in him.

He lived,—he enjoyed,— he fought,—he died as a man.

Where human happiness was on trial or sought, there did his activities find their play.

To enjoy was good,—to suffer, bad; such was the creed he taught.

And now, to keep his wish in this last sad part, we read the words of that great, grand soul he loved:

(Ingersoll's Oration at brother's grave concluding the services.)

T. C. Jefferies' Address:

Friends:—My heart is heavy; your hearts are heavy, and I am afraid that anything that I could say would do but little to diminish your awful sorrow or soothe your aching hearts(but one great man has said, "I want to take from every grave its sting."

While can do but little, still I want to help to take from every grave the awful fear which some folks hold, and to comfort all I can these sorrowing ones gathered here today.

We are met this afternoon to honor and to care for one who in life we liked to call our friend. In all the world there is not a question on which there is more speculation than the end of each and all; no question is more important and none is more difficult to answer. We vainly try to wring an answer from the grave and hope again to meet and greet those we have loved and lost. We do not know if death ends life, or in reality begins it, but we cannot but believe the dead will never know again the pain of sorrow. We think of our friend as resting in quiet and in peace.

Perhaps we have grown to think of death as a greater terror than it really is. If it is indeed eternal rest, and freedom from all earthly pains and tears and anguish, then we do say that death is a great and lasting benefit. We cling to those we love and cannot let them go, but our aching hearts are comforted by the noble, manly life our friend has led; by the fight he fought, and always where the fray was thickest. He is crowned with laurels of justice, truth and courage. He despised the easy things of life and never fouled in the great game of existence. Our friend is dead, but his influence goes on forever. He has long been a part of us and always will remain. His body will be tenderly laid away, but his being, his life, his love, his works will be with us always.

This good man was not afraid of death, and then why should we fear for him when we know that death at worst can be no worse than life? In the sanctuary of the tomb, death gives to all eternal rest. And anyone who prophesies a future filled with tears and torment for another, ceases to be human.

This man was human, but he was great. Danger never struck him in the back,—he always faced it. With his loved and loving wife and son, we bow our heads in sympathetic grief.

Bert Sonnels, when living, fearlessly faced and flayed all forms of sham, hypocrisy and superstition, and death, the great conqueror, had little terror for him. He rests today from the fight he so long and so valiantly waged. He sleeps peacefully. Who is there in Elyria to rise up and take his place? Nobody. Who can spread so earnestly and so ably the blessed gospel of freedom of thought, of liberty of conscience? We need people of this man's type to hasten the golden dawning of the grander day. We have lost a dear comrade, but Freedom and Liberty have lost a dearer.

This man possessed the courage of his convictions. He was forceful; he dared to speak his thoughts and he was honest. O, how few there are in the world who have the courage of their convictions, which this man had so abundantly! Bert Sonnels has spent his life in trying to teach people to be more tolerant, less bigoted, less selfish and less superstitious.

Regardless of how we may have differed with any of his opinions, we all must say "This man was good; this man was brave; this man was sincere!"

In the words of the immortal genius, at whose shrine our friend was wont to worship:

"Life is a narrow vale between the cold and barren peaks of two eternities; we strive in vain to look beyond the heights; we cry aloud, and the only answer is the echo of our wailing cry. From the voiceless lips of the unreplying dead there comes no word, but in the night of death, hope sees a star, and listening love can hear the rustle of a wing."

You Have Been Lied To.

Valeria, Iowa.—Mr. James E. Hughes, Editor Blue Grass Blade. —Dear Sir:—I have been informed that the Blade does not go into your house: if so would kindly give a reason. Your truly—L. E. C. VERNOCORN.

Note.—I have recently received several letters from Blade subscribers along the above lines. I had supposed after running the Blue Grass Blade for 17 years, and being tried for the penitentiary twice along with Mr. Moore, that there was no one who believed that report. But there seems to be a few who are forgetful of what we have done for Freethought, and for their benefit we will say that it is a LIE, and the man who made it used to be, and is now in our employe, a member of the Episcopal church choir.